

Defending Foundations

Rep. H. Allen Smith Tried to Stymie Probe Of Foundations at a Significant Time

By Drew Pearson

THERE HAS BEEN some backstage skirmishing by Rep. H. Allen Smith (R-Calif.) to kill the Patman investigation of foundations.

Rep. Wright Patman (D-Tex.) has dug up some amazing facts on certain big foundations and how some use tax-free money to finance political campaigns and right-wing propaganda.

Smith, a member of the House Rules Committee, teamed up with Chairman Howard Smith (D-Va.) early in this Congress to try to stymie the probe. Later, H. Allen Smith made a speech on the House floor opposing the Patman committee's right to subpoena foundation records.

"I do not think we should pester some of these good foundations and get all their records, more records and more records," he said.

Significantly, his speech was made as the trustees of the Irvine Foundation, one of the biggest in California, were refusing to submit more records to the Patman committee.

The Irvine Foundation owns 93,000 acres of land in Southern California's fast-growing suburban Orange County, with 13 miles of Pacific coast line. The Irvine Ranch, now chiefly in orange trees, constitutes one of the most important potentials for suburban real estate development in Southern California. Various people, including Rep. H. Allen Smith, have wanted to get part of it.

The Congressman wrote the following letter to Mrs. Thurmond Clarke, mother of Joan Irvine Smith, biggest single stockholder in the Irvine Ranch.

"Since our telephone call when I was in the district around Labor Day, I haven't heard from you, your daughter, or her attorneys. I simply wanted you to know that I will be more than pleased

to take this up with the chief counsel of the Foundation Subcommittee of the House Small Business Committee (Patman's committee) and do anything I can to assist if you will let me have basic information as to what you have in mind.

"On another subject," he continued, "for the past year or two I have been trying to get started at Irvine, maybe building an office building, apartments, or other facilities. A very excellent builder friend of mine, named Frank Howard, and another close friend, Lou Lewis, have moved to Irvine Terrace and are anxious to move their building facilities into the area and try to get started and grow along with the development of the Irvine Ranch. We have had a number of conversations with Charlie Thomas and Mr. Porter and others who have certainly been most cooperative. I simply wanted to mention this because I know that we could build in accordance with the regulations in a very outstanding manner, and if some opportunity opens up, we would certainly be interested. Of course we're not in the million-dollar category of large development but could do a very good job on what we're able to do."

What the Congressman apparently didn't realize was that Mrs. Clarke and her daughter Joan are delighted to have the Irvine Foundation investigated, have nothing to hide, and Joan Smith has cooperated fully with the Patman committee. It's the majority of the trustees of this strange and powerful foundation who have been opposing the Patman probe. More about them in a future column.

Nixon in Mexico

RICHARD NIXON, arriving in Mexico City on a "sentimental journey" to cele-

brate his silver wedding anniversary, got off two boos in three minutes at an airport news conference.

Commenting on the Dominican Republic situation, the former Vice President chided Mexico for "abstaining" when the Organization of American States voted to cooperate in trying to solve the crisis.

"Mexico is too big and important a country to abstain," Nixon declared earnestly. "We would like to see her vote, even if she votes against us."

Apparently he didn't realize that Mexico, along with Chile, Peru, Uruguay and Ecuador, voted "no" against the plan to send an inter-American peacekeeping force to Santo Domingo. Venezuela was the only country to abstain.

Next, Nixon told the reporters that Colombia "is on the verge of civil war." His statement, widely quoted in Mexico and carried in wire service dispatches to the rest of Latin America, helped to undermine the Colombian government and brought a stinging retort from Carlos Escallon Villa, Colombian charge d'affaires in Mexico City.

Nixon's statement, he said, was "just as reckless and at least as mistaken as it would be to say that the United States is on the verge of civil war because in some states there are groups of criminals who do not understand President Johnson's integrationist policies and who bring death to many Negro citizens . . ."

Colombia's bandit gangs, now limited to one region of the country, pose the same sort of problem, Escallon said.

"I have complete confidence that both Colombia and the United States will soon liquidate their respective problems, through the energetic actions of their governments," he said.

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